

Attn: FOIA Officer

Under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. subsection 552, I am requesting:

All communication related to Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) staff emails between January 2019 and May 2020 regarding: per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in landfills, compost, wastewater treatment plants, and incinerators.

At a minimum, EPA must search for the following terms in the email inboxes of OLEM staff where “PFAS” and at least one of the following words appear together in an exchange between January 2019 and May 2020: “incinerator”; “landfill”; “compost”; and/or “wastewater”. Any one of these terms appearing alone may be excluded; Waste Dive is only seeking documents containing “PFAS” where it appears with one or more of the other stated terms.

I am only requesting publicly available information. Please exclude confidential business information.

Waste Dive Qualifies as a Representative of the News Media

Waste Dive is one of the oldest publications under Industry Dive’s scope. We provide in-depth journalism and insight focused on the news and trends shaping the waste and recycling industry. Our focus extends to collections and transfer, organics, zero waste, landfills, recycling, policy and beyond. Our articles are free and available to the public and are not primarily for commercial purpose.

Waiver of All Costs

I request a waiver of all costs associated with fulfilling this submission pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii). The information requested is in the public interest as Waste Dive requires those documents in order to provide an accurate representation to the public of conversations underway at the federal level regarding potential PFAS regulations, which could significantly impact both the waste industry and the broader public, which relies on essential waste services.

Our articles are free and available to the public, are not primarily for commercial purpose, and on a weekly basis we encounter questions from the public regarding the possibility of federal regulations and advisories pertaining to PFAS and how they may impact the waste sector.

Any documents provided by the agency will be used solely for improving public understanding of the government’s operations as they pertain to this specific area. The EPA is currently considering designating PFOA and PFOS as CERCLA hazardous substances

(<https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/eAgendaViewRule?pubId=202004&RIN=2050-AH09>), with major implications for waste sites, cleanup processes, and cost to companies, municipalities, and the public.

We cover PFAS on a regular basis, in keeping with public interest, to such an extent that we have a landing page specifically for those articles, available at: <https://www.wastedive.com/news/pfas-forever-chemical-waste-industry/569209/>. The articles produced based on any documents provided by the agency would be published on that landing page and available for free to the public. We would use the documents specifically to answer broader questions about the agency's mentality regarding regulations around PFAS and landfills; incinerators; compost; and/or wastewater treatment plants.

If this request is denied in full or in part, please cite the exemptions pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b) that justify the denial. If an exemption applies, however, please consider exercising the agency's discretionary release powers to disclose the records. Additionally, please release all reasonably segregable portions of the records as they are collected.

If you have any questions about handling this request, please don't hesitate to call me at the following number 413-341-7591 or email me at ecrunden@industrydive.com / ecrunden@gmail.com.

Best,
Ev Crunden
Reporter, Waste Dive